

Message Text

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ORIGIN NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

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DRAFTED BY AF/WESCHAUFLE JR
APPROVED BY WESCHAUFLE JR
S/S-MR SEBASTIAN
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O 122134Z NOV 76 ZFF4
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USMISSION GENEVA IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 279160

NODIS
FOR WISNER ONLY

FOLLOWING REPEAT LONDON 18259 ACTION SECSTATE 12 NOV 76

QUOTE S E C R E T LONDON 18259

NODIS

DEPARTMENT PASS GENEVA FOR WISNER

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PFOR, RH, UK
SUBJECT: RHODESIA: FCO/EMBASSY BRIEFING NOVEMBER 12

1. PHILIP MANSFIELD MENTIONED RECENT PRESS STORIES
(PARTICULARLY HELLA PICK'S WASHINGTON DATE-LINED ARTI-
CLE IN THE NOVEMBER 9 GUARDIAN - LONDON 18190) REGARD-
ING AMERICAN ATTITUDES TOWARDS A BRITISH ROLE IN THE
RHODESIAN SETTLEMENT. HE SAID THAT MINISTERS HAD NOT
FOUND SUCH REPORTING HELPFUL, AND THAT AMBASSADOR
RAMSBOTHAM HAD TAKEN UP THE MATTER WITH SENIOR U.S.
OFFICIALS IN WASHINGTON. IVOR RICHARD HAS ALSO
COMPLAINED TO THE FCO THAT RECENT ARTICLES FILED IN
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WASHINGTON SERVED TO UNDERMINE HIS POSITION WITH THE

NATIONALISTS IN GENEVA.

2. MANSFIELD COMMENTED THAT MINISTERS HERE, ALTHOUGH INFORMALLY DISCUSSING AMONGST THEMSELVES THE PROBLEMS OF A BRITISH ROLE, ARE GREATLY PREOCCUPIED BY DOMESTIC POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC TROUBLES. HE TERMED THE PRESENT WEEK IN PARLIAMENT "BIZARRE". HE IMPLIED THAT MINISTERS ARE UNDER CONSIDERABLE STRAIN AND NEWS STORIES ABOUT AMERICAN PRESSURE ON THE BRITISH--REGARDLESS OF THE SOURCES WHICH, HE SAID, HE ASSUMED WERE NATIONALIST--ARE LIKELY TO BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE. NOW WOULD BE THE WORST TIME TO RAISE THE SUBJECT FORMALLY IN THE BEDRAGGLED CABINET.

3. MANSFIELD SAID THAT DEVELOPMENTS IN GENEVA DO NOT YET MERIT A SERIOUS CABINET CONSIDERATION OF A BRITISH ROLE. BUT IF EVENTS FORCED A DISCUSSION OF THE SUBJECT, BRITAIN WOULD WANT TO USE THE POSSIBILITY OF A LIMITED INVOLVEMENT AS AN ACE-IN-THE-HOLE, NOT AS SOME TATTERED CARD SLOPPILY DEALT FROM THE TOP OF THE DECK.

ARMSTRONG
UNQUOTE KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, CAT-B, DEBRIEFINGS, INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION, NATIONALISTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 NOV 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MartinML
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE279160
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: WESCHAUFLE JR
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Film Number: N760008-0255
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 2
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761152/aaaabszz.tel
Line Count: 84
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: NODIS, ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS, ONLY
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MartinML
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <12 MAY 2004 by woolflhd>; APPROVED <08 SEP 2004 by MartinML>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: LOCK1
Status: NATIVE
Subject: RHODESIA: FCO/EMBASSY BRIEFING NOVEMBER 12
TAGS: PFOR, PDEV, RH, UK, US, (MANSFIELD, PHILIP)
To: GENEVA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006